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STIGMATIZATION, SUBSTANCE USE, AND SEXUAL RISK BEHAVIOR AMONG LATINO GAY AND BISEXUAL MEN AND TRANSGENDER PERSONS

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Following the minority stress model as a framework, we examine the associations between racial and homosexual stigma, substance use, and sexual risk behavior among a respondent-driven sample of Latino gay and bisexual men and male-to-female transgender persons (GBT) in Chicago and San Francisco (N = 643). We use structural equations to test such a model and disentangle the possible effects of the different stigmas and their corresponding dimensions (i.e., perception, experience, internalization). Findings revealed distinct pathways to sexual risk. Two are typified by experienced homosexual stigma and internalized racial stigma via multiple drug use, and two are characterized by experienced racial stigma and internalized homosexual stigma via alcohol use.

BACKGROUND

Associations between substance use and sexual risk behavior among gay and bisexual men and male-to-female transgender persons (GBT) have been documented throughout the AIDS epidemic (Colfax et al., 2004; Ross, Mattison, & Franklin, 2003; Stall et al., 2001; Stall & Purcell, 2000; Valdiserri et al., 1988); however, the proximal factors which may predispose individuals to use substances and engage in sexual risk behavior are not well understood (Kalichman, Tannenbaum, & Nachimson, 1998; Stall & Purcell, 2000). Conceptually, substance use has been viewed as a

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